

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION GROUP MEETING NOTES

September 25, 2002

Participants: Fred Grant-Owyhee County consultant, Chad Gibson-Owyhee County consultant, Marj McHenry-Idaho Army National Guard, Robert Lytle-Idaho Army National, Jack Peterson-BLM State Office, Jenna Whitlock-BLM, Mike O'Donnell-BLM
Facilitator: Marsha Bracke, Bracke & Associates, Inc. (working for North Country Resources, Inc. and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution)

Meeting purpose

The Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG) met on Wednesday, September 25, 2002, in the BLM Lower Snake River District Office Conference Room from 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. The meeting objectives were to:

- Report on the final issue statement and development process
- Review drafts and discuss refinements and process respective to Desired Future Conditions
- Obtain status reports on a number of planning activities associated with the RMPs

The facilitator maintained meeting conclusions, feedback and action items on flip chart notes as a record of the group meeting. Those flip chart notes follow this meeting summary.

Results

Participants reviewed the ICG's June 19 meeting notes and action items. No changes were made and the notes will be distributed as final.

Public Issues Statements—Mike O'Donnell-BLM, distributed the meeting summary and public issue statements from the September 10, 2002, issues refinement meeting. He described the meeting process and objectives; involvement of the Resource Advisory Council, Cooperating Agencies and the Intergovernmental Coordination; and the intent to keep the process open and transparent by inviting the public to observe the groups at work. Feedback since that meeting has been overwhelmingly positive.

Clarification was sought respective to the use of the word "balance" and "allowable" in the Vegetation statement on Bruneau. It was explained that activities, specifically grazing and recreation, are allowable uses and are consistent with BLM's multiple use responsibility. It was suggested that the terms might be clarified in a definitions section.

Clarification was also sought as to what the group meant by “enhancement of raptor populations and their habitats in the Recreation/NCA issue statement. It was pointed out that we could do little to enhance raptor populations but could do a lot to the habitat. We need to be clear about what we can do so we don’t set an unreachable goal. The different purposes of the issue statements were discussed including:

- a reflection of the range of public concern which can be contradictory
- the desired future conditions
- a description of the conditions for which the area is intended to be managed.

The group discussed the ability of the desired future conditions to outline what that might mean should it become an RMP objective.

There was discussion regarding the results of the Wings and Roots meeting where the Tribe expressed some interest in revising the public issue statements to reflect their interests. Mike explained that it was clarified to the Tribe that these public issue statements are a reflection of the public concern as collected throughout the scoping process—that they are not positions or an indication of decisions, but reflect the range of public concern that BLM is obligated to consider and address as it conducts its analysis and develops alternatives. The Tribe, given its nation-to-nation status, will have issues specific to itself that will be considered via consultation. Mike reported that the tribe accepted that clarification.

Desired Future Conditions. The BLM’s very rough drafts of the Desired Future Conditions for the NCA and the Bruneau were distributed to participants along with the revisions proposed by Owyhee County. Mike O’Donnell reported that the county revision was an excellent one, and while the details may not necessarily be specifically consistent with BLM’s thinking at this time, it was an excellent revision of what had been produced so far.

The group discussed the Desired Future Conditions in the context of its purpose, the implications they have on alternatives development, a proposed revision acknowledging the role of the Idaho Army National Guard, the need to collect more information from the rest of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group agencies, and the process for completing the document and presenting the product to the public.

Depending on the extent of the comments received, BLM will determine the format by which it will finalize the product. There is an interest in conducting a process similar to that completed on September 10, 2002 with the public issue statements; a corresponding recognition that the Desired Future Conditions require a high level of understanding of regulatory requirements; and the recognition that the BLM is the decision-maker respective to the final product.

Other items:

- The socio-economic study contract has been let to University of Idaho; the scope of that contract was revised to ensure that the study considered the impacts of recreation on county infrastructure.
- Planning Criteria have been substantially revised based on the collection of input received and are at the state office for review at this time. Mike reiterated his desire for a transparent process and proposed that in addition to sending the document out to the ICG and Cooperating Agencies for comment, that he was interested in also distributing them publicly for informational purposes.
- The Idaho Army National Guard has signed their Cooperating Agency MOU; Owyhee County is anticipated to sign theirs on October 7 in Murphy; Elmore County personnel have changed and the process of soliciting their involvement is likely starting over.

Action Items

1. Marsha will provide the draft meeting notes to BLM by Monday, September 30.
2. Mike and Fred will coordinate having Mike on the agenda of the October 1 Owyhee Initiative meeting.
3. Mike and Marj will work the inclusion of a statement in the Desired Future Conditions respective to the anticipated Idaho Army National Guard role in the area (and will be subsequently presented at public meetings as a component of the document).
4. Mike will coordinate with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services to bring a presentation to the next meeting respective to the RMP consultation process.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 23, 2002. The next meeting agenda includes a

- Interagency review for consistency of the Desired Future Conditions, and
- A presentation from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services respective to the RMP consultation process.

The meeting will be held from 9 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

FLIP CHART NOTES

ICG PURPOSE

- Increase two-way information sharing ...
- Assist in resolving inconsistencies between federal and non-federal plans

ICG OBJECTIVES

- Pursue opportunities to develop complementary and coordinated plans with agencies and local governments
- Serve as a liaison among state and federal agencies, counties and communities
- Review and comment on issues to be addressed, alternatives formulation, and draft documents to identify potential inconsistencies...
- Coordinate the sharing of data
- Assist in identifying opportunities for public involvement

MEETING CONDUCT

- Participation—Yes!
- Listen to others
- One person speaks at a time—refrain from side conversations
- Help stay focused on topic under discussion—honor time constraints
- Share discussion time with others
- Turn off/mute cell phones

FEEDBACK: DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS

- Perhaps add Idaho Army Guard statement
- County statement #10—how to quantify
- Does “quantifiable” statement belong in Desired Future Conditions?
- Many aspects of RMP going on at different levels—might start building “monitoring” section
- Desired Future Conditions will impact alternatives development
- What process to finalize Desired Future Conditions?
- How and when to address military training—can we start that discussion? Clarify that this document is not about stopping military training; start to build that awareness.
- Need specific input of Idaho Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITIONS: NEXT STEPS

- Solicit additional agency review
- Interdisciplinary team, cooperating agency staff will make best revision
- To ICG on October 23
- Wings and Roots briefing—November
- Commissioners forum briefing—November
- For public comment (to understand what desired future conditions mean, educational, did we hit/miss the mark?)

- Revision process, depending on the extent of comments, will likely include a configuration of the interdisciplinary team, cooperating agencies, intergovernmental coordination group
- BLM has final word
- We want to be as transparent as we can be—last process was very good

NEXT MEETING

October 23 2002

9am – Noon

BLM

- Desired Future Conditions—pre public discussion
- USFWS – presentation on consultation regarding Resource Management Plans

ACTION ITEMS

1. Marsha – deliver draft meeting notes to BLM by Monday, 9/30
2. Mike & Fred – Coordinating having Mike on the Owyhee Initiative agenda on October 1; Mike to get copies of charter from Fred at that time
3. Mike/Marj follow up on Desired Future Condition statement respective to Idaho Army National Guard